

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

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R 271748Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3519

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 2765

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO, BE

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR TO BELGIUM

1. NEWLY-ARRIVED PORTUGUESE AMBASSADOR MANUEL DE
ALMEDIDA COUNTINHO PAID COURTESY CALL ON ME TODAY.
HE MADE FOLLOWING POINTS OF INTEREST IN OPEN, FRIENDLY SESSION:

(A) HE COMMENTED ON DEMARCHES MADE BY AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI
AND CERTAIN OTHER WESTERN EUROPEAN AMBASSADORS, SAYING
THEY WERE "HELPFUL". HE SAID THESE DEMARCHES SERVED TO
REMIND GOP OF AMERICAN AND WESTERN CONCERN AND SUPPORT
IN ITS EFFORTS TO REMAIN FREE FROM COMMUNIST CONTROL.
IN THIS EFFORT HE SAID CONTINUED US SUPPORT WAS VITAL.

(B) HE CHARACTERIZED GOMES AS A MODERATE, BUT UNDER
STRONG LEFTIST PRESSURES.

(C) HE ADMITTED THAT GOP WAS NOT COOPERATING IN
ASSURING PROTECTION TO POLITICAL CANDIDATES, WHO IN
SOME CASES, HE SAID, MUST CHANGE THEIR RESIDENCES
NIGHTLY. HE WAS OBVIOUSLY WORRIED OVER INCAPACITY OF GOP.

(D) DESPITE SECURITY PROBLEM, HE FORESAW SOCIALISTS
EMERGING AS STRONGEST PARTY IN ELECTIONS. HE SAID THIS
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WAS IMPORTANT SINCE THE COMMUNISTS, WHO NOW HAVE POWERFUL

VOICE IN PRESENT DECISION-MAKING, WOULD BE WEAKENED IF
SOCIALISTS EMERGE AS LEADERS OF NON-COMMUNIST MAJORITY.

2. AMBASSADOR DE ALMEIDA COUTINHO IMPRESSED ME AS
A WARM, FRIENDLY INDIVIDUAL, DEEPLY CONCERNED WITH THE
FUTURE OF PORTUGAL, AND PERSONALLY STRONGLY PRO-AMERICAN.
A 35-YEAR VETERAN OF THE PORTUGUESE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE,
HE HAS HAD THREE TOURS IN LATIN AMERICA, THREE IN EAST
ASIA AND SERVED ON HIS COUNTRY'S DELEGATION TO NATO IN
PARIS. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD BE BUSY HERE AS HE HAD ONLY
ONE CAREER DIPLOMAT ON WHOM HE CAN COUNT ON HIS STAFF
HERE; THE REST ALL BEING POLITICAL APPOINTEES.FIRESTONE

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